

# Dr Félix Martí Ibáñez's 'Considerations on Homosexuality' and the Spanish Anarchist Cultural Project

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## ABSTRACT

This article places a reconsideration of the Spanish anarchist doctor Félix Martí Ibáñez's work on sexual morality and, in particular, homosexuality within the dual historiographical framework of scientific ideas and anarchism's own history of engagement with these subjects. It argues that recent developments in the writing of the history of anarchism have paid far more attention to the articulation of cultural issues within anarchist movements as part of their overall contestation against the 'bourgeois', religious and capitalist world and sets this article within this renewed framework. The thought of Félix Martí Ibáñez is assessed not for its supposed 'scientificity' but for what it tells us about the eclectic nature of Spanish anarchism at the time and for what such thought signifies for today's libertarian movement.

**Keywords:** Félix Martí Ibáñez, Gregorio Marañón, homosexuality, science, intersexuality

## INTRODUCTION

More than twenty years have passed since, in an article on the Cartagena-born anarchist medical doctor Félix Martí Ibáñez, I wrote that the history of Spanish anarchism had been dominated by a focus on its organisations and prominent individuals, to the detriment of a broad analysis of the movement's press and the ideas contained within. Fortunately, in the wake of pioneering studies such as that of José Álvarez Junco in the mid-1970s, my lament can no longer be sustained.<sup>1</sup> The last fifteen years have seen a proliferation of high quality publications on a

variety of Spanish anarchist undertakings, particularly within the cultural field. The movement's press is being constantly mined for new insights into this rich past from methodological and theoretical perspectives.<sup>2</sup> Martí Ibáñez himself has been the subject of renewed interest and the important work of José Vicente Martí Bosca and Antonio Rey González on the medical traditions of Spanish anarchism and Martí Ibáñez's place within them has continued to illuminate our protagonist's life and thought.<sup>3</sup>

Who was Félix Martí Ibáñez and why are his writings important for the history of anarchism? Do they have any resonance for today's libertarian movement? Martí Ibáñez was born into a middle-class, educated family in the southern Spanish town of Cartagena.<sup>4</sup> His mother, Josefa Ibáñez Sánchez, was a pianist as well as a teacher and his father, Félix Martí Alpera, would become a renowned progressive educationalist. Félix, the son, studied Medicine at the University of Barcelona and went on to write his doctoral thesis on ancient eastern thought at the Central University in Madrid. His resulting 'Ensayo sobre la Historia de la Psicología y la Fisiología místicas de la India' [Essay on the History of the Mystical Psychology and Physiology of India] was passed in December 1934.<sup>5</sup> Already harbouring an interest in questions relating to philosophy, sexuality and even eugenics, Martí Ibáñez began to collaborate with the libertarian review *Estudios. Revista ecléctica*, based in Valencia. *Estudios*, having grown out of the previous *Generación Consciente*, was published by the enterprising Juan J. Pastor, and some 75,000 copies of each monthly issue were printed in its hey-day.<sup>6</sup> These copies flooded bookstalls and anarchist union houses in Spain and arrived via the Atlantic to Argentina and other Latin American countries. Its striking graphics, often by Josep Renau and Manuel Monleón, its up-to-date articles that addressed all-important current issues and its ability to 'speak' to its audience – not least via its 'Questions & Answers' section – meant that the publication was a resounding success.<sup>7</sup>

Martí Ibáñez contributed to *Estudios* in three main ways: in articles on sexuality, birth control and eugenics; in his own 'Questions & Answers' section ('Consultorio Psíquico-Sexual') inaugurated in January 1936; and, through his articles on medical questions.<sup>8</sup> Martí Ibáñez also intervened in academic congresses such as the Tenth International History of Medicine Congress in 1935 where he presented no less than four pieces that derived from his doctoral research.<sup>9</sup> The congress allowed him to extend his network of contacts within the professional medical world, bringing him into the orbit of the scientific ideas of the period. The endocrinologist and historian of science Gregorio Marañón acted as president of the History of Medicine Congress and became one of the sources of medical

ideas that Martí Ibáñez would continually draw on, not least for his exploration of homosexuality that same year. Just as the wider libertarian movement sealed the relation between thought and action, whether in the trade union sphere or in the creation of workers' clubs, Martí Ibáñez's ideas did not remain on the page. He operated a medical surgery in Barcelona and participated in the anarcho-syndicalist CNT's initiative to create a Workers' Sanitary Organisation ('Organización Sanitaria Obrera') that would attend to workers' health needs accessibly and at low cost.<sup>10</sup> Later, during the revolutionary period of the Civil War (1936-1939), he acted as Director of Health and Social Assistance (SIAS) in Catalonia, a post the CNT held until it was removed from positions of power as part of the 'counter-revolution' of May 1937. After being removed from this position, Martí Ibáñez continued to write for libertarian periodicals and reviews, notably to record the achievements of SIAS,<sup>11</sup> but eventually left for New York in exile at the end of the Civil War. Here, he set up a medical journal, *M.D.*, and continued to write but without an explicit anarchist message. It is the period prior to this episode, however, that we turn to and concentrate on in the remainder of this article. We focus in particular on Martí Ibáñez's 1935 discussion of homosexuality as a contribution to the on-going analysis of the cultural potency, scientific engagement and discussion of issues relating to sexuality that the Spanish anarchist movement displayed.<sup>12</sup> In the process, we open up new vistas on the often conflicted stance of the libertarian movement with respect to same-sex desire.

## MARTÍ IBÁÑEZ AND THE QUESTION OF SEXUALITY

As well as writing about homosexuality, a rarity at the time in anarchist circles in Spain or anywhere else for that matter,<sup>13</sup> Martí Ibáñez addressed a wide range of issues pertaining to sexuality under the rubric of 'eugenics and sexual morality' in his *Estudios* articles. A number of examples follow. In one of his first contributions, 'The Sexual Revolution', Martí Ibáñez argued that a tempestuous or violent revolution did not necessarily resolve some of the deeper problems humanity faced. Written in the days after the failed uprising against the increasingly strident Spanish Right that took place in October 1934 in the northern province of Asturias, Martí Ibáñez noted that once the 'war-like rumours' of recent days had subsided and a relative calm returned, the sexual problem remained unresolved.<sup>14</sup> Rather than any violent or rapid movement of change in this field, what was required, Martí Ibáñez argued, was a gradual transformation, a change in mentalities and a complete renewal of social organisation. He wrote: 'The sexual question cannot be resolved by a revolution, at least, by a rapid, theatrical, ostentatious

revolution'.<sup>15</sup> What was required was a 'phalanx of tenacious fighters' who would spread the word of a new expression of sexuality and the relations between men and women that would not be simply channelled by 'some hastily written decree'. It was only then that love could be lifted out of the 'mire which surrounds it nowadays'. Once free, it could 'raise itself in elegant flight towards the bright light of freedom'. In exploring these issues, Martí Ibáñez was contributing to a long-standing concern within anarchism on the 'woman question', the construction of the family and the politics of reproduction.<sup>16</sup> The limitations of libertarian discourse with respect to the retention and reproduction of patriarchal views have, however, been revealed in studies ranging from Spain to Argentina. The Spanish anarchist women's organisation *Mujeres Libres* often lamented the dismissive and sexist treatment its members were subject to within the movement and, despite an extensive commitment through the written word to women's emancipation, organisations and individuals often fell short of much vaunted libertarian ideals.<sup>17</sup>

Félix Martí Ibáñez's writing displayed less of a generic or class-based approach than a 'human', personalised and, as the previous quotation shows, lyrical one. The 'Questions & Answers' sections in *Estudios* showed these characteristics, as did some of his longer articles. Two such pieces responded to individual questions from libertarians on their sexual dilemmas.<sup>18</sup> In his 'Letter to a Spanish Girl', named as Iris in the text, Martí Ibáñez addressed an unidentified issue brought up by the woman in question on a matter of sexual morality. This was probably about whether she should satisfy her desires freely or not without being married. The response was tailored to the individual – it was not possible 'to make this answer a blueprint for all female bodies' – and the anarchist doctor argued that she should respond to her sexual impulses despite not being married. It was either this approach or forced chastity, an option that was 'against nature' and replete with dangerous social and personal consequences, Martí Ibáñez advised. In this way, Martí Ibáñez argued in favour of 'free love' and the open fulfilment of one's desires.

The second piece, published a few months later, was addressed to Rafael Hasan in Buenos Aires. Here, Martí Ibáñez urged the writer and men in general to respect women's wants and desires, not to impose their own needs, and to embrace 'loyal love comradeship' as a libertarian practice. Through detailed highly personalised responses such as these, Martí Ibáñez was faithful to anarchist conceptions of mutual respect and to women's empowerment, expressed in a rather mellifluous prose, which to today's audience, may seem quaint. It was, nevertheless, an attempt to reach his audience and to reflect his commitment to libertarian values through the power of words.<sup>19</sup> There was an attempt to forge a sexual morality that, despite conceding differences between men and women, viewed the sexes as complemen-

tary. His words reflected a progressive position common in 'advanced' political sectors in the early twentieth century even though practice on the ground was far more mixed. Martí Ibáñez's words also responded to a more 'spiritual' approach towards sexuality, an almost mystical interpretation that reflected his own interest in eastern philosophy from his thesis days and his new readings on psychoanalysis, particularly with respect to the work of Freud and Alfred Adler's 'individual psychology'. Everyone could find his or her own path to sexual satisfaction and liberation with anarchist anti-authoritarianism illuminating the way.<sup>20</sup>

## FÉLIX MARTÍ IBÁÑEZ AND HOMOSEXUALITY

In general, the anarchist press from Europe to Latin America was either silent on the question of homosexuality, both male and female, or was ultimately condemnatory of same-sex desire. Few voices argued for positions that were more liberal and even fewer argued that homosexuality should be accepted on the same basis as heterosexual relations. Condemnation of homosexuality drew on non-anarchist as well as libertarian medicalised understandings of 'perversion', whereby heterosexuality was viewed as the only acceptable form of sexual expression. Homosexuality in men was also condemned as evidence of a lack of manliness; it was often viewed as incompatible with upright socialist or anarchist behaviour or even a betrayal of the workers' cause.<sup>21</sup> In women, homosexuality was viewed as part of a process of 'virilization' where supposedly male characteristics were adopted; such acts were seen as a betrayal of the natural destiny of women as bearers of children. Finally, same-sex relations were viewed as suspect as they were seen as being common in the repressed circles of the religious orders (often with paedophilia attached).<sup>22</sup> There were, nevertheless, some exceptions to these interpretations within anarchist thought. In France, for example, among individualist anarchists particularly, there was some greater acceptance of homosexuality on an equal footing with heterosexual relations. A frequent writer in the individualist anarchist *L'En Dehors*, Dr A. Robertson Proschowsky, argued that a free society would 'resolve' the issue, presumably by removing the constraints on the expression of free and 'normal' sexuality, thus eliminating homosexuality.<sup>23</sup> Others, such as E. Fournier, were slightly more accepting.<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere, 'sodomy' was regarded as iniquitous, exploitative and morally deviant.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, and given the tenor of debate within the international anarchist movement, Martí Ibáñez's article is, although not exceptional, an unusual foray into the area. As we will see, however, while it refused to condemn homosexuality outright, like many anarchists and sexologists of the time, Martí Ibáñez hoped that through education and the elimination of religious and

oppressive discourse, men and women would develop their sexuality in accordance with the 'correct path' of 'natural' heterosexuality. In articulating such a position, it becomes clear how Martí Ibáñez's thought was heavily indebted to a number of sexologists and in particular to the theories of Gregorio Marañón on the 'intersexuality' of human beings.

## THE SEXOLOGICAL MOMENT AND THE CONCEPT OF INTERSEXUALITY

In order to examine these themes, some background on the sexological world of the 1920s and 1930s is required. As many works have pointed out, the label 'homosexuality' was new to the nineteenth century and its connotations differed substantially from those encapsulated by the category 'sodomy'.<sup>26</sup> There was a qualitative and quantitative change in the ways in which 'sexual deviance' was treated as it was, at least partially, decriminalised in many European countries in this century. Martí Ibáñez himself noted this change and wrote that 'the issue has been placed on the table of psychological dissection and analysed scientifically in all its complex structure', a process that opened up 'a final stage' in the discussion of the phenomenon.<sup>27</sup>

Homosexuality, in this respect, constituted a facet of human behaviour that possessed a history. Not only had it existed over time; it had also undergone evolving treatment by legal experts, doctors and psychiatrists, not to speak of changing public attitudes. In Spain, this change of public and legal attitudes reached an important juncture in the mid-century when a raft of publications examined the issue, often as texts translated from other languages. Homosexuality was, in most circumstances, not illegal in Spain and only when such acts involved minors, were abusive in some way or overly 'scandalous' did they merit the attention of the law. A major development in attention to questions of this nature was the French medico-legal expert Ambroise Tardieu's *Étude médico-légale sur les attentats aux mœurs* (1857), promptly translated in Spain in 1863.<sup>28</sup> Tardieu's work was followed by writings by figures such as Westphal, Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis, providing details on the nature, 'causes' and characteristics of homosexuality and the individuals that practised it. Other home-grown specialists followed suit and drew on Tardieu to help categorise 'pederasts' into two types: those 'active' and those 'passive' in sexual relations.<sup>29</sup>

This interest continued into the twentieth century with many works disseminating the thought of international commentators on sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. The sexologist César Juarros, for example, published his *Psiquiatría forense* in 1914 and his later *La Psiquiatría del Médico General* in 1919. Juarros followed the work of his colleague Emmanuel Régis, whose treaty on

psychiatry the Spanish author had translated in 1911.<sup>30</sup> In his 1919 work, Juarros discussed the causes of mental illness. Among the causes were factors such as degeneration, inheritance and predisposition to illness. All these elements could help to cause homosexuality and other 'conditions' such as kleptomania, sadism and exhibitionism.<sup>31</sup> The environment in which one was brought up could also seriously influence one's later sexual behaviour.<sup>32</sup>

Probably the most complete set of theories on the aetiology of homosexuality in the Spanish context, nevertheless, came from the pen of endocrinologist and historian of science, Gregorio Marañón. It was Marañón, basing his ideas on those of Richard Goldschmidt, who developed a theory of 'intersexuality' and the 'intermediate sexual states'. These theories explained not only homosexuality but also hermaphroditism and the lack of sexual differentiation between maleness and femaleness in certain individuals.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Marañón understood homosexuality to be a kind of intersexual state that originated precisely in such a lack of sexual differentiation, in respect of characteristics including body type, hair growth, demeanour and comportment. These intersexual states were, therefore, 'natural', could be explained scientifically, but were not necessarily desirable.

## HOMOSEXUALITY, SCIENCE, HISTORY

One of the most arresting aspects of Martí Ibáñez's article on homosexuality is the sense of scientific and historical urgency that it conveyed. It opened with the assertion 'The unstoppable unfolding of time brings in its chronological grasp the fecund desire to delve into the turbulent waters of sexuality'.<sup>34</sup> Armed with scientific truth and opposing 'the horde of moralists who continue in their unrelenting repression', Martí Ibáñez noted that 'there are many men of science who have focused from different perspectives on the problem of homosexuality'.<sup>35</sup> In voicing his opposition to the repression of homosexuals, Martí Ibáñez reserved for their defenders a particular role: 'It is precisely those of us of normal sexuality who are obliged to bring succour to those that display deviant sexuality'.<sup>36</sup> Such a stance would allow those 'deviants' to see a 'ray of hope' on an otherwise 'bleak horizon'.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to signalling the important role of science with respect to the reconsideration and (partial) 'rehabilitation' of homosexuality,<sup>38</sup> Martí Ibáñez provided an overview of 'the historical evolution of the attitudes adopted towards homosexuality by society'.<sup>39</sup> According to Martí Ibáñez, this history would be made up of three phases. The first phase covered early humanity through to Graeco-Roman society. It was characterised by the full acceptance of homosexuality, which was considered compatible with the dignity of the individual. Martí Ibáñez

affirmed that homosexuality was tolerated in this period and even became reputed as a virile kind of love and valued over and above 'normal' love.<sup>40</sup>

The second phase of homosexuality was inaugurated by Christianity. For Martí Ibáñez, following an anticlerical interpretation common within the libertarian movement, Christianity signified the deterioration of human values and in the treatment of same-sex desire. It was this 'ascetic and anti-pagan reaction that judged homosexuality as a nefarious and anti-natural sin'.<sup>41</sup> The hegemony of the Church prevailed into the nineteenth century and meant that 'men of science' became contaminated with religious thought to the extent that it made 'men just as responsible for their deviation as diabetics were for their illness or a hunchback for his deformity'.<sup>42</sup>

These first two stages in the history of homosexuality would be complemented and transformed by that which began in the twentieth century. This period gave way to scientific and psychological explanations of human behaviour and rejected the jurisprudence of the previous periods. Martí Ibáñez recognised that the old legislation supposed (except in cases of madness) that 'all human acts depended on the will of those that executed them'.<sup>43</sup> What the new psychiatric theories did, however, was to trump the question of the will by the concept of the instinct. The instinct represented a new kind of compulsion and was understood as something unavoidable in the individual. Deviations of the human instinct responded to a degenerative trait or a twisting of something essential to the person. It was in this third period that Martí Ibáñez clearly placed himself as the interpreter of new scientific theories on homosexuality. What the chronology did not explain, however, was why the tolerance of homosexuality in the Graeco-Roman period could not return, especially once religious prejudice had been dissolved. Clearly, anarchism would not be the vehicle for such a return of the past. Finally, although Martí Ibáñez adopted the new theories on the sexual instinct as a driving force in sexuality, he did not completely jettison either environmental influences on behaviour or the power of the will to conform one's desires.

## **HOMOSEXUALITY-INVERSION AND HOMOSEXUALITY-PERVERSION**

After this discussion of the sexological context of this period, we can now examine the scientific concepts that Martí Ibáñez employed in his 1935 article. The ideas advanced by Martí Ibáñez coincided in large measure with the more 'progressive' stance taken by the sexual sciences of the 1920s and 1930s. First of all, Martí Ibáñez considered the phenomenon of homosexuality from two perspectives – congenital or inherited homosexuality and acquired homosexuality, both common



tropes in this period. He would label these two, respectively, 'homosexuality-inversion' and 'homosexuality-perversion'. Second, Martí Ibáñez would view these two varieties through the lens of two sets of theories to explain the 'causes' of homosexuality: biopathological theories and psychological explanations.

'Homosexuality-inversion', or 'inverted love', 'in which a man or woman responds to an irresistible demand on their instincts, stronger than their will and moral sense, which impels them to engage in deviant love', was distinguished from 'perversion', which responded to an exercise of will, snobbishness and the search for new sensations.<sup>44</sup> In respect of aetiologies, the first form of homosexuality resulted from impulses that were instinctive and congenital, innate or latent in the individual since birth and the second form occurred as a consequence of post-natal and environmental factors that modified the sexual instinct as it developed.

Martí Ibáñez's reference to the question of will ('voluntad') is significant as it tapped into a moral discourse that viewed 'deviations' from the norm as voluntaristic behaviour and, therefore, potentially at least, behaviour that could be changed. Despite anarchist support for the power of will as a mechanism permitting the throwing off of old ideas, making way for new modes of living as a decided act, however, Martí Ibáñez proved incapable of harnessing the liberatory potential of will in respect of homosexuality.

Despite his identification of these two types of homosexuality, Martí Ibáñez admitted that, at times, it was very difficult to distinguish between the two and it was even possible to observe incidences of heterosexuality in the life course of 'congenital inverts'.<sup>45</sup> The focus of the article, however, was less on 'homosexuality-perversion' and more on 'homosexuality-inversion'. The latter would be explained by an intermediary position that admitted the importance of the environment but that postulated the important role of inherited degeneration in the emergence of homosexuality.

Psychology was also an element in the development of the homosexual: 'The latest studies of the English and German schools of Sexology tend to emphasise the importance of the environment in the genesis of homosexuality'. Sexology had also established the importance of the environment in those cases where the psychological conditions for homosexuality to emerge were present. What was required in this sense was 'an appropriate psychological terrain where the morbid plant of sexual deviation could flourish'.<sup>46</sup> Environmental and innate instinctual factors would act in concert to produce the 'homosexual personality' and this meant that any clear distinction between 'nature' and 'nurture' – and in fact between instinct and will – disappeared: 'all cases of the abnormality that we have studied are congenital and acquired at the same time; in their generation, both constitu-

tional psycho-biological and environmental factors operate'.<sup>47</sup> A range of authors including Freud, Stekel, Hesnard and Adler were employed to sustain this rather ambiguous approach.

### **A VEHICLE THAT CAREERS OFF INTO 'A ROCKY LANDSCAPE OF WEEDS'**

Of greater importance in the theory underpinning Martí Ibáñez's explanations of homosexuality, nevertheless, were those articulated by Gregorio Marañón. Even though Martí Ibáñez drew on others who discussed homosexuality, such as Westermarck from a sociological point of view, Gide from the vantage point of literature, and individuals such as Wilde, it was this 'famous Spanish sexologist',<sup>48</sup> as the anarchist described him, who provided the imagery to highlight the 'deviant' nature of the homosexual whose sexual instinct had embarked on an 'incorrect' path. Given Marañón's high profile in Hispanic cultures with respect to the 'sexual question' and his broadly liberal outlook, Martí Ibáñez saw him as an authority on the issue and a progressive voice that could be harnessed in order to add weight to his own interpretations.<sup>49</sup> The sexual instinct, for both Marañón and Martí Ibáñez, was comparable to a car that moved forward when the driver placed his or her foot on the accelerator but did not steer the vehicle in any particular direction. The direction of the car would be 'set by the hand that was placed on the driving wheel, which would send the car along the smooth surface of the road or throw it off course through tortuous terrains'.<sup>50</sup> The sexual instinct would be the car, the driver's foot on the accelerator would be the 'internal secretions' or hormones that governed sexuality and the hands on the wheel would take on the role of the psyche and environmental factors.

In life, the sexual instinct functioned initially in a directionless manner. It was then affected by the hormones, the psyche and environmental factors. Usually, it would take 'the normal direction of the opposite sex – just as the car driven by an expert hand would speed along the paved road'.<sup>51</sup> If the sexual instinct was not engaged in this manner, however, if it swerved from the normal route, it would be directed towards individuals of the same sex, 'just like a car that was driven badly careers off the road and drives through a rocky landscape of weeds', a metaphor also employed by Marañón.<sup>52</sup> Martí Ibáñez coincided with Marañón in addition in his recourse to the idea of the initial bisexuality of the individual. Here, 'bisexuality' meant the combination of traits of the two sexes, male and female, rather than sexual desire towards individuals of both sexes. As Martí Ibáñez explained, sexual behaviour was influenced by the 'initial bisexuality that existed in the human embryo'.<sup>53</sup> The use of such a concept allowed both Martí Ibáñez and Marañón

to understand the process of sexual differentiation between individuals and this bisexual origin could give rise to 'ambivalent' individuals or intersexual persons. According to Marañón, the category of intersexuality also covered homosexuality, which in turn resulted from the lack of sexual differentiation between boys and girls. The 'other sex' lay dormant in all individuals even though it had been 'defeated' in a great battle during the formation of the embryo. Remains of the other sex were present in all individuals and they explained the mixture of primary and secondary sexual characters in the person and their potential propensity towards homosexuality.<sup>54</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Homosexuality, through the optic provided by Martí Ibáñez, was deemed to be both natural and explainable, although generally undesirable, in accordance with the most 'progressive' current scientific and sexological theories. The employment of such scientific thought drew on a deeply rooted tendency within anarchism globally and Spanish anarchism in particular that sought to harness scientific knowledge to explain the social world. This stance was, however, not taken as read even within the movement and Martí Ibáñez lamented the fact that it had been a struggle, even with 'a public so cultured and liberal as that of *Estudios*', to be able to broach the subject.<sup>55</sup> Internal resistances aside, Martí Ibáñez viewed homosexuality as a kind of 'error', a route that the individual was compelled to take because of his or her endocrinological, psychological or innate make-up. The precise relationship between environmental factors and inheritance and between instinct and will, and their relative importance, however, was unclear in Martí Ibáñez's work as 'inverts', as we have seen, were seen as products of congenital and acquired factors at the same time.

The progressive possibilities offered by sexological science in terms of the acceptance of homosexuality as 'natural', especially by drawing on the work of Marañón, were curtailed in anarchist thought by the obsessive search for underlying pathology and deviance. Those few anarchists who dared to deal with the subject were caught between these two discursive poles to the detriment of the anarchist commitment to personal autonomy, opposition to sexual normativity and the sexual fulfilment of the free individual. Martí Ibáñez did not escape this bind. On the one hand, he discussed homosexuality through the pathological lens of sexual science. Drawing notably on the work of Gregorio Marañón, Martí Ibáñez incorporated into his own views the Spanish scientist's ambivalent views on homosexuality. The latter, considering Gide's *Corydon*, for example, argued that while

Gide believed that inversion was natural and durable, for him it was a temporary normality and one that would disappear in time.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, by raising the issue within the libertarian movement, Martí Ibáñez argued that it was possible to achieve two 'great undertakings'. The first of these was that 'congenital inverters' would be able to enjoy sexual freedom along the lines of what the German sex reformer Magnus Hirschfeld had argued for.<sup>57</sup> The second was less promising: that by means of sex education, new generations would be able to eliminate the 'homosexual deviation' and every man would have none other in his mind than 'a sweet and devoted' woman.<sup>58</sup> As Enrique Álvarez has pointed out, it was the seeming possibility of homosexual desire, acknowledged by sexual science and evoked by the 'countless repetitions of hyperbolic masculinities' produced by the movement, which simultaneously disavowed its very existence.<sup>59</sup> In this formulation, the possibility of lesbian desire was also closed down.

The issue here is less whether Martí Ibáñez's 'considerations on homosexuality' were truthful or scientifically accurate – they were very much products of the age and need to be considered as such. More importantly, they allow us to reflect on the importance given to scientific understandings as an arbiter between social morality, religion and political ideology. They also encourage a reassessment of the contribution made by anarchism in different parts of the world with respect to the question of same-sex sexuality. Now, with queer and gender politics continuing to be contested terrains in the context of the radical process of 'de-essentialization' of sex, gender and sexuality, much of this scientific and moralistic discourse appears outdated. Anarchism, however, is well placed to broach such issues from the perspective of the knowledge of its own history and from a position that assesses the effects of scientific discourse on our everyday sexual lives.

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## NOTES

1. Richard Cleminson, 'Sexuality and the Revolution of Mentalities: Anarchism, Science, and Sex in the Thought of Félix Martí Ibáñez', *Anarchist Studies*, 5, 1 (1997): 45-58; José Álvarez Junco, *La ideología política del anarquismo español (1868-1910)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1991 [1976]).
2. An example of this would be James Yeoman, 'Salud y Anarquía desde Dowlais: The

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3. José Vicente Martí Boscà and Antonio Rey González, 'Félix Martí Ibáñez: aportación biográfica a su etapa española (1911-1939)', *Medicina & historia: Revista de estudios históricos de las ciencias médicas*, 2 (2001): 1-15; José Vicente Martí Boscà and Antonio Rey (eds), *Actas del I Simposio Internacional Félix Martí Ibáñez: Medicina, Historia e Ideología* (Valencia: Biblioteca Valenciana, 2004); José Vicente Martí Boscà and Antonio Rey González, 'Félix Martí Ibáñez (Cartagena, 1911 – Nueva York, 1972)', *Revista de Salud Ambiental*, 17, 2 (2017): 208-216.
  4. Most of the biographical details recorded here come from Martí Boscà and Rey González, 'Félix Martí Ibáñez (Cartagena, 1911 – Nueva York, 1972)'.
  5. *Ibid.*, p209.
  6. Javier Navarro Navarro, 'El paraíso de la razón': *La revista Estudios (1928-1937) y el mundo cultural anarquista* (Valencia: Edicions Alfons el Magnànim, 1997), p67.
  7. Carlos Tabernero-Holgado, Isabel Jiménez-Lucena and Jorge Molero-Mesa, 'Movimiento libertario y autogestión del conocimiento en la España del primer tercio del siglo XX: la sección «Preguntas y respuestas» (1930-1937) de la revista *Estudios*', *Dynamis*, 33, 1 (2013): 43-67. For the visual aspects of *Estudios*, see Antonio Fernández de Ybarra Esquerdo, 'Knowledge by Visual Transmission: Sexuality and Anarchist Visual Culture in *Estudios* (1928-37)', *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 24, 3 (2012): 179-200.
  8. Martí Boscà and Rey González, 'Félix Martí Ibáñez (Cartagena, 1911 – Nueva York, 1972)', pp209-210; Félix Martí Ibáñez, *Consultorio psíquico-sexual*, Ignacio Vidal (ed.), (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1975).
  9. Martí Boscà and Rey González, 'Félix Martí Ibáñez (Cartagena, 1911 – Nueva York, 1972)', p210.
  10. Isabel Jiménez Lucena and Jorge Molero Mesa, 'Per una 'sanitat proletària'. L'Organització Sanitària Obrera de la Confederació Nacional del Treball a la Barcelona republicana, (1935-1936)', *Gimbernat*, 39 (2013): 211-221.
  11. Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Sanidad, Asistencia social y Eugenesia en la Revolución social española', *Estudios*, 160 (1937): 34-38.
  12. Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones sobre el homosexualismo', *Estudios*, 145 (1935): 3-6.
  13. An engaging account of the reception of ideas on homosexuality among anarchists in the United States can be read in Terence Kissack, *Free Comrades: Anarchism and*

- Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917* (Oakland, CA/Edinburgh: AK Press, 2008). Specifically for some brief comments on Martí Ibáñez's thought on the issue, see Martha A. Ackelsberg, *Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women* (Oakland, CA/Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005 [1991]), p49. The nature of Emma Goldman's relations with other women and specifically the issue of homosexuality are both viewed through the prism of ambivalence, which is set to work historically, in Clare Hemmings, *Considering Emma Goldman: feminist political ambivalence and the imaginative archive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).
14. Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'La revolución sexual', *Estudios*, 135 (1934): 3-5.
  15. In this sense, Martí Ibáñez shared some ideas with the Austrian sex radical Wilhelm Reich. On Reich in Spain, with special reference to the anarchists, see Richard Cleminson, 'First Steps towards Mass Sex-economic Therapy? Wilhelm Reich and the Spanish Revolution', *Anarchist Studies*, 1, 1 (1993): 25-37.
  16. For the Spanish case, see Álvarez Junco, *La ideología política del anarquismo español*.
  17. María Angeles García-Maroto, *La mujer en la prensa anarquista: España 1900-1936* (Madrid: Fundación de Estudios Libertarios Anselmo Lorenzo, 1996).
  18. Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Carta a una muchacha española sobre el problema sexual', *Estudios*, 138 (1935): 4-6; 'Carta a Buenos Aires. A don Rafael Hasan', *Estudios*, 144 (1935): 11-13.
  19. The importance of the written word, in book form, for the anarchist movement has been highlighted recently by Alejandro Lora Medina, 'El poder de la lectura como herramienta revolucionaria. El caso del anarquismo español de los años treinta', *Pasado y memoria: Revista de historia contemporánea*, 17 (2018): 335-360.
  20. Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Psicología del conflicto espiritual', *Estudios*, 148 (1935): 17-19; Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Freud', *Tiempos Nuevos*, 6 (1936): 278-280.
  21. Richard Cleminson, 'The Construction of Masculinity in the Spanish Labour Movement: A Study of the *Revista Blanca* (1923-36)', *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 24, 3 (2012): 210-217.
  22. P. Conard, 'Sexualité et Anticlericalisme (Madrid 1910)', *Hispania. Revista Española de Historia*, 117 (1971): 103-131; Francisco Vázquez García, 'La campaña contra los sacerdotes pederastas (1880-1912): un ejemplo de 'pánico moral' en la España de la Restauración', *Hispania. Revista Española de Historia*, 260 (2018): 759-786.
  23. Dr A. Robertson Proschowsky, 'L'Homosexualité relativement à la société', *L'En Dehors*, 19-20 (1923): 2.
  24. E. Fournier, 'Normaux ou Anormaux?', *L'En Dehors*, 60 (1925): 1 & 4. The article by Martí Ibáñez published in *Estudios* in September 1935 was swiftly translated and appeared in November 1935 in this same publication as Dr Félix Martí Ibáñez, 'Considérations sur l'homosexualité', *L'En Dehors*, 288 (1935): 66-67.

25. An example of this can be seen in the Portuguese anarcho-syndicalist periodical, *A Batalha*, which in 1922 protested against the exploitation of the indigenous population in the then Portuguese colony of Angola under the rule of Norton de Matos. Prostitution and the sexual exploitation of both girls and boys were read as a descent into the practices of Sodom. See Anon., 'A nova Sodoma', *A Batalha*, 3, 995 (1922): 1.
26. See, for example, Jeffrey Weeks, *Coming Out: Homosexual politics in Britain from the nineteenth century to the present* (London: Quartet Books, 1990).
27. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p3. For a full account of the sexual sciences and homosexuality at this time see Richard Cleminson and Francisco Vázquez García, *'Los Invisibles': A History of Male Homosexuality in Spain, 1850-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007).
28. Francisco Vázquez García, 'El discurso médico y la invención del homosexual (España 1840-1915)', *Asclepio*, 53, 2 (2001): 143-162, 151, n.18.
29. Pedro Mata, *Tratado de Medicina y Cirugía Legal* (Madrid: Cárlos Bailly-Baillière, 5th edition, 1874), p489.
30. César Juarros, *Psiquiatría forense*, (Madrid: Imprenta de Antonio Marzo, 1914); César Juarros, *La Psiquiatría del Médico General* (Madrid: Ruiz, Hermanos, 1919); E. Régis, *Tratado de Psiquiatría* (Madrid: Saturnino Calleja Fernández, 1911).
31. Juarros, *La Psiquiatría del Médico General*, p74.
32. *Ibid.*, p92.
33. Gregorio Maraón, *La evolución de la sexualidad y los estados intersexuales* (Madrid: Morata, 2nd edition, 1930).
34. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p3.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*, p5.
37. *Ibid.*, p3.
38. I use this word here as it was employed in another article focusing on sexual morality and, in particular, on masturbation that was published three months after Martí Ibáñez's 'Consideraciones'. In this piece, the author argued that the dangers, both moral and physical, of the practice had been exaggerated, thus proposing that it be 'rehabilitated' as a normal and indeed healthy undertaking. See A.G. Llauradó, 'Rehabilitación del onanismo', *Estudios*, 148 (1935): 20-22.
39. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p3.
40. *Ibid.*, p3; David Halperin, *One hundred years of homosexuality and other essays on Greek love* (New York/London: Routledge, 1990). One should not forget that homosexual relations were mainly a male privilege.
41. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p3.
42. Cf. Maraón, *La evolución de la sexualidad*, p130, where a similar metaphor is employed.

43. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p3.
44. Ibid., p4. On the uses of the will and the potential for subverting given norms, particularly with respect to queer desire, see Sara Ahmed, *Willful Subjects* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014), pp7-12.
45. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p4.
46. Both quotes from ibid.
47. Ibid. Practically the same formulation was employed in Marañón, *La evolución de la sexualidad*, p154.
48. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p5.
49. For two studies on Marañón, who later fell foul of progressive and anti-fascist sectors for his criticism of the Republic and his apparent rapprochement to the politics of the Right, see Gary D. Keller, *The significance and impact of Gregorio Marañón: literary criticism, biographies and historiography* (New York: Bilingual Press, 1977); Alfredo J. Sosa-Velasco, *Médicos escritores en España, 1885-1955: Santiago Ramón y Cajal, Pío Baroja, Gregorio Marañón y Antonio Vallejo Nágera* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2010). Marañón's own *Liberalism and communism: the background of the Spanish Civil War* (London: Spanish Press Services Limited, 1938), published before the end of the Civil War, displays his disenchantment with some sectors of the organised left.
50. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p5.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid; see Marañón, *La evolución de la sexualidad*, p142, n.1. On the idea of the 'swerve' as the direction of travel of 'deviant desire', see once more Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*, pp9-10.
53. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p5.
54. Gregorio Marañón, 'Nuevas ideas sobre el problema de la intersexualidad y sobre la cronología de los sexos', in Gregorio Marañón, *Obras Completas*, v. IV (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1966), pp165-183 [orig. 1928].
55. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p5. The author does not record whether he 'treated' any homosexuals as part of his clinical practice.
56. See the discussion on this point in Dagmar Vandebosch, *Y no con el lenguaje preciso de la ciencia. La ensayística de Gregorio Marañón en la entreguerra española* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2006), p180.
57. Martí Ibáñez, 'Consideraciones', p5.
58. Ibid.
59. On the scant visibility and presence of homosexuality within the Spanish anarchist movement, see Enrique Álvarez, 'Man un/made: male homosocial and homosexual desire in anarchist culture of the Spanish Civil War', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 18, 1 (2012): 17-32, 20.